Focus Schools 2013/14

• What is a Focus School?
• How was our school identified as a Focus School?
• How can I review the data regarding this designation?
• What does this mean for our school?
• What supports will be provided to assist with this effort?
• What are the next steps?
What is a Focus School?

- Focus Schools are identified as the ten percent (10%) of Michigan schools having the widest gap in student achievement between their lowest and highest performing students.
How was our school identified as a Focus School?

- The Top to Bottom Ranking uses three metrics:
  - Achievement
  - Improvement in Achievement
  - Gaps in Achievement

- For more detail about the metric used to identify Focus Schools, please visit:
  - http://mi.gov/focusschools
Where can we see our data?

• The 2012/13 Top-to-Bottom Individual School Lookup Tool that shows all three components of a Focus School’s profile can be found upon public release (August 2013) at [http://mi.gov/ttb](http://mi.gov/ttb)

• An embargoed preview of each Focus school’s lookup page was emailed to district Superintendents in July

• More information on Focus Schools can be found at: [www.michigan.gov/focusschools](http://www.michigan.gov/focusschools)
Focus Schools are in a four-year cohort beginning with their first year of identification (2013 cohort this year). This designation will appear on the school’s Scorecard. If a 2013 cohort school is no longer identified in 2017-18, the school is no longer listed as a Focus School and leaves its cohort.

Any year between now and 2017-18 in which a school is not identified as a Focus School, the requirements and supports are conditionally suspended.

If a school is not identified and then re-identified between now and 2017-18, the requirements and supports match its cohort year.
What do we do now?

1. Participate in the Superintendent’s Dropout Challenge: Identify 10 – 15 students who are at risk due to:

   - Attendance
   - Behavior Problems
   - Course/Class Proficiency
What supports are available?

Superintendent’s Dropout Challenge resources:

• MDE website:  
  www.michigan.gov/dropoutchallenge

• IES Practice Guide on Dropout Prevention
2. All districts with Focus Schools are expected to:

- Conduct Data Dialogues with their Focus Schools to identify teaching and learning priorities that are likely to close the achievement gap

- Ensure that the school post the identified teaching and learning priorities in ASSIST by November 25th and includes these in the spring revision of the SIP
What supports are available?

• Student Data Reports are available with a secure log-in at MI School Data: https://www.mischooldata.org

• A protocol for Data Driven Dialogues by Bruce Wellman and Laura Lipton: http://www.miravia.com/pdf/DDD_study_guide_final.pdf

• Focus School Diagnostic in ASSIST for posting the Teaching and Learning Priorities http://advanc-ed.org/mde - Online Resources and Tools – Guide to Completing and Submitting Priority and Focus Requirements
3. All districts with Focus Schools are expected to:

- Participate in district-level Data Dialogues on systems-level changes needed to support the rapid change needed in Focus Schools
- Implement necessary actions to facilitate change in support to Focus Schools
- Revise the District Improvement Plans to reflect these system improvements
What supports are available?

- There is a self-assessment of district systems available at the Education Resource Strategies (ERS) website: http://www.erstrategies.org/assessments/resource_check

- Suggestions for district actions and resources aligned to the ERS Self-Assessment can be found at: http://mitoolkit.org

- There are resources for district improving planning and navigating the ASSIST website at: http://advanc-ed.org/mde - Guide to Completing and Submitting the DIP and DIP Flowchart
4. All Districts with Focus Schools are expected to:

• Monitor and evaluate the Focus School’s School Improvement Plan to ensure that teaching and learning priorities to close the gap are included

• Report to the School Board quarterly on the progress in the Focus Schools
What supports are available?

- Michigan’s Continuous School Improvement (MI CSI) work group has posted online training for the school improvement process: http://advanc-ed.org/mde Training – School Improvement Training Powerpoints – DO: Implement, Monitor and Evaluate this Plan

5. Notify parents in the Focus School’s attendance area of this identification by August 23. This is described in another presentation.

6. There are Title I set-aside requirements that begin in the second year of identification for Title I schools and in the third year of identification for Title I districts. These are described in another presentation.
• All Title I District with Focus Schools will be assigned a District Improvement Facilitator who will work with central office staff for approximately 40 hours during the school year to provide assistance in completing the requirements.
Next Steps

• Develop a plan to address internal and community communications regarding the Focus school designation

• If your school is a Title I school, determine who from central office will be working with the MSU-assigned District Improvement Facilitator

• Begin to implement the requirements as outlined here
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